

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

51-07

8/15/07

DIOXIN SURVEY 08

This notice informs inspection program personnel that FSIS, in conjunction with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), is conducting the Dioxin 08 survey beginning September 4, 2007. This survey is scheduled to run 12 to 18 months. The survey will gather data about dioxin levels in U.S. beef, pork, and poultry.

Upon receipt of this notice and on the 15th of each month thereafter, Public Health Veterinarians (PHVs) should check the list of participating establishments to determine whether establishments in their scheduled assignments are included in the dioxin survey for the following month. The list of randomly generated establishments for each month and copies of the documents that OPHS will include in the sampling supplies boxes are in Outlook at:

Public Folders/ All Public Folders/ Lab Sample Management Reports/ District (select appropriate District)/ Domestic/ Residues).

The dioxin survey supplies will be labeled "ARS-Special Project." If supplies do not arrive within one week of the scheduled dioxin survey sample date for the establishment, PHVs are to contact the Midwestern Laboratory.

The sampling supplies sent to the inspection office will include the following documents:

1. Dioxin Collection Instructions;
2. Dioxin Contact List; and
3. Dioxin Survey Flyer.

Refer technical questions to the Policy Development Division (formerly the Technical Service Center) at 1-800-233-3935.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic

NOTICE EXPIRES: 9/1/08

OPI: OPPED

Background: FSIS, in conjunction with the Agricultural Research Service Laboratory in Fargo, ND, is conducting Dioxin 08, a baseline study, to determine levels of dioxins in the products that FSIS regulates. Dioxins are a group of compounds of public health concern. These compounds are ubiquitous but generally occur at very low levels throughout the environment.

When samples are collected for this study, it is very important to follow the directions below.

Supplies for Fat Collection

Approximately one week before the scheduled sampling date each inspection office from which fat samples will be requested will receive an insulated residue sample-shipping container labeled “ARS – Special Project”.

1. The shipping container will contain:
 - FSIS Form 10,210-3 Unified Sampling Form for Dioxin 08
 - Sample identification labels (FSIS FORM 7355-2A 2B)
 - Directions entitled: Information for Public Health Veterinarians:
Collection of Fat for Dioxin Testing.
 - Flyer: To the Establishment Management
 - List of **Contact Persons**
 - Absorbent pad/paper towel
 - Gel pack (upon receipt, remove from shipping container and immediately place gel pack in freezer)
 - Glass jar with Teflon-coated lid (fat sample container)
 - Bubble wrap to protect the glass jar (wrapped around jar and fastened with rubber bands)
 - Additional rubber bands to secure bubble wrap around jar
 - 12"x15" Ziplock bag for shipment of glass jar containing fat sample
 - FedEx Airbill

Recipient's Name -	Dr. Janice Huwe or Ms. Marge Lorentzsen
Company -	USDA ARS Biosciences Research Laboratory
Address-	1605 Albrecht Boulevard
	Fargo, ND 58105
 - 6 “ x 12” plastic bag for completed FSIS Form 10,210-3 Unified Sampling Form

If the supplies are damaged contact the Midwestern Lab via Outlook. Go to Global Address list, type in “Sampling supplies,” and click on Midwestern Laboratory. Also, if a component from the specially outfitted shipping container is missing/damaged from the specially outfitted shipping container the in-plant PHV will immediately notify ML by going to the Outlook Global Address List, typing in

“Sampling supplies,” and clicking on Midwestern Laboratory to inform ML of the problem.

Random Selection of Animals/Carcass:

If slaughter class designated on the unified sampling form is being produced during week of sample request:

1. Every effort should be made to randomly select the carcass for taking the fat sample during the requested week listed on the sample request form.
2. Random selection of animal should be independent of availability of animal ID.
3. The carcass should be selected before the final wash (see next section for taking fat samples).

If no suitable animal is available:

1. When a suitable animal or birds from the designated slaughter class is/are not available, on the requested date, *collect the fat sample on the first date a suitable animal or birds is/are available*. Record the actual collection date in Block 19, FSIS Form 10,210-3. **The time to wait for a suitable animal or birds should not exceed 6 days beyond the date specified in Block 4, FSIS Form 10,210-3.**
2. **Do not collect tissue from another market class.** If a suitable animal or birds will not be available for more than 6 days beyond the date specified in block 4, FSIS Form 10,210-3, *record the reason why the sample was not collected in **Block 28**, FSIS Form 10,210-3*. Send this form by First Class Mail in an envelope to Attn: Dr. Janice Huwe or Ms. Marge Lorentzsen, USDA, ARS Biosciences Research Laboratory, P. O. Box 5674, University Station, Fargo ND 58105-5674. Return unused shipping container and contents, including the ARS Laboratory FedEx Air bill, to **Midwestern Laboratory**. Request pre-addressed return FedEx Air bills from ML via Outlook. Go to Global Address list, type in "Sampling supplies," and click on Midwestern Laboratory. Send the carton unsealed; do not use FSIS seals. **Secure all items by pressing the foam plug as deeply as possible into the shipping container.**

If there are any questions concerning the selection of animals, contact Policy Development Division (formerly Technical Service Center) by email: TechCenter@fsis.usda.gov with Dioxin in the subject line.

Collecting the Fat Sample:

You must be VERY careful to prevent dioxin contamination of the glass jar. **AVOID USE OF PAPER TOWELS.** Do not wipe your hands (gloves) or knife with paper towels. Paper towels may be contaminated with dioxin and PCBs. **REMEMBER** low levels of dioxin are often present in the environment. **DO NOT** open the glass jar until you start to remove the fat from the carcass. Transfer the specimen directly from carcass to glass jar. **Close** the jar **IMMEDIATELY** after you have filled it with fat.

1. Affix the sample identification label to the sample jar. This label provides the sample number on FSIS Form 10,210-3 for the sample. See Block 1 (FSIS Form 10,210-3) and matching label.
2. Sanitize hands, gloves, and knife before collecting sample.
3. Samples must be collected before the final carcass wash.
4. **Species:**
 - a. **Beef:** Collect a 0.5 (one-half) pound sample of back fat from a randomly selected healthy appearing animal that has passed inspection. Should carcass selected not contain 0.5 (one-half) pound of back fat, select another one. **Do not retain carcass.**
 - b. **Pork:** Collect a 0.5 (one-half) pound sample of subcutaneous belly fat from a randomly selected healthy appearing animal that has passed inspection. **If sampling a gilt, do not include mammary tissue. Do not retain carcass.**
 - c. **Poultry:** Collect a 0.5 (one-half) pound sample of abdominal (flap) fat from 3 (three) randomly selected healthy appearing birds that have passed inspection. Be sure to collect carcasses prior to final (or other on line reprocessing rinses) wash. **Do not retain any birds.**
5. After fat is in jar, close the lid immediately.
6. Freeze fat thoroughly in closed sample jar.
7. Maintain sample security during collection, freezing, and shipping.

Animal and Producer Information

**The following information is crucial. **

Plant officials are required by 9 CFR Part II, paragraph 320.1 to keep records concerning producer information. Should a sample contain dioxin above a certain level, additional samples may be requested from the same producer to ascertain whether the finding arose from an isolated incident. Obtain all animal identification and traceback information available at the plant.

Record the name and address of the producer in Block 26, FSIS Form 10,210-3. For beef and pork, use Block 27, and Block 28 if needed for additional animal identification information. Include all back tags, ear tags, brands, tattoos, and other forms of identification.

Should the space provided on the form not be sufficient, use supplemental sheets of plain paper. At the top of each sheet, print in large legible letters:

The number of FSIS Form 10210-3 (see Block 1 for number) followed by a dash and the words "Continuation Sheet".

Sample Shipment:

Do not pack sample in the shipping container until the sample (in the sample jar) and the gel pack have been frozen for a minimum of 8 hours.

1. Ensure that the sample jar has sample identification label affixed. Do not remove from freezer until you are ready to pack and ship sample.

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2. Ensure that the FSIS Form 10,210-3 is completed. Fold it in half with Blocks 1 through 41 on the outside. Place in the 6" x 12" plastic bag.
3. Remove gel pack from freezer and return to shipping container.
4. Remove sample jar from freezer.
5. Test jar lid to assure it is securely closed. Place bubble wrap around jar and secure with rubber bands. Place wrapped jar in 12"x 15" Zip lock bag. Zip bag shut.
6. Place the upright jar on top of the frozen gel pack. Place the corresponding FSIS Form 10,210-3 in plastic bag on top of jar. **Secure all items by pressing the foam plug as deeply as possible into the shipping container.**
7. Seal according to FSIS Directive 7355.1 Rev. 2.
8. Ship to ARS Biosciences Research Laboratory using FedEx Air bill provided.
9. Thank you!

DIOXIN PROJECT
Contact List

All persons listed below may be most easily reached by Outlook email.

Questions about Dioxin08 Survey guidelines related to procedures after sample collection and acceptability of samples received in the laboratory

Randy Sutton, Residue Branch, 202-690-6606, randy.sutton@fsis.usda.gov
Doritz Pagan-Rodriguez, Residue Branch, 202-690-6390, doritz.pagan-rodriguez@fsis.usda.gov

Questions about Animal Selection

Send email questions to TechCenter@fsis.usda.gov with Dioxin on the subject line.

Questions about Supplies, Labels

Don Gordon 314-263-2680 ext. 341, donald.gordon@fsis.usda.gov
Howard Bronner 314-263-2680, howard.bronner@fsis.usda.gov
De Mar Hightower 314-263-2680, demar.hightower@fsis.usda.gov

Questions related to field operation such as Collection Procedures, Collection of trace-back information for samples with Dioxin levels of concern, and Communication with the field when a sample is not collected:

James Heminover 402-344-5000 james.heminover@fsis.usda.gov

**To the Establishment Management
and
To the FSIS PHV/Inspector-In-Charge**

NOTE: *The PHV/Inspector-In-Charge is to give a copy of this flyer to the establishment management each time a dioxin survey sample is collected.*

FSIS Dioxin Survey

- In September 2007, FSIS began to survey dioxin in U.S. meat and poultry products. This 12-18 month survey is a followup, exploratory project under the National Residue Program to gather information on dioxin in these products. A total of 500 fat samples will be collected in federally inspected establishments and the survey data will be used to determine if dioxin levels in meat and poultry remain low and if steps can be taken to reduce dioxin levels.
- This study will include 139 steers and heifers; 136 market hogs; 151 young chickens, and 84 young turkeys for a total of 510 animals. Samples will be taken at the end of the production line, just prior to the final rinse. Back fat will be collected from steers and heifers; subcutaneous belly fat will be collected from market hogs and fat off flaps will be collected from poultry.
- Samples will be packaged and shipped to the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) laboratory in Fargo, ND, for analysis.
- FSIS will not report laboratory results back to establishments on a sample-by-sample basis. Thus, establishments are not required to hold product pending laboratory results for samples collected in this survey.
- Sample analysis by the ARS will take about four to six weeks. In the event of a test result significantly different from background, FSIS will seek additional information about the sample and about the animal from which that sample was taken.
- In the event of a very high dioxin level or very unusual finding, FSIS will conduct additional investigation and consider other actions to identify possible sources of dioxin coming into the food chain. If sources can be identified, FSIS will take steps to see that further dioxin inputs into the food supply are stopped. It is very unlikely that the Agency will recommend a recall based solely on a dioxin finding.
- ARS will report analytical findings to FSIS approximately four to six weeks after a sample is taken. FSIS will notify any establishment by approximately six weeks from the time that an initial sample is taken if there is any reason for additional investigation. If an establishment does not hear from FSIS, the establishment can assume that further investigation will not occur.
- The survey results will be presented in a final report that will be available to the public. This report will contain a summary of findings characterizing general dioxin

levels in U.S. meat and poultry products generally. Individual establishments will not be identified and all participants will receive a copy of the final report.

- If you have questions about the survey contact Doritza Pagan-Rodriguez, Residue Branch, 202-690-6390 or at Doritza.pagan-rodriquez@fsis.usda.gov. For questions about carcass selection or the Dioxin Survey Notice contact the Policy Development Division (formerly the Technical Service Center) at TechCenter@fsis.usda.gov with Dioxin in the subject line.